

KIMBELL ART MUSEUM TO PRESENT CONSERVATION PANEL DISCUSSION

**Will Include Five Conservators Representing the Kimbell, The Met, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco,
and Princeton University Art Museum**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2023

FORT WORTH, TX—The Kimbell Art Museum announces an art conservation panel discussion, “The Past, Present, and Future of Conservation at the Kimbell,” on Saturday, April 22, at 10 a.m. To mark the 50th anniversary of the museum, Kimbell conservators past and present will look back at memorable research and treatments, discuss the vital role of the conservation program within the museum and reflect on changes in the profession.

The program will begin with a welcome from Eric M. Lee, director of the Kimbell Art Museum, and the panel will include Claire Barry, director of conservation emerita, Kimbell Art Museum; Michael Gallagher, Sherman Fairchild Chairman of the Department of Paintings Conservation, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Elise Effmann Clifford, head of paintings conservation, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Bart J.C. Devolder, chief conservator, Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey; and Peter Van de Moortel, chief conservator, Kimbell Art Museum.

“The Kimbell has had a distinguished history in conservation, and many leading conservators have been associated with its department,” said Eric M. Lee, director of the Kimbell Art Museum. “The panel will be a reunion of sorts, with current and former Kimbell conservators looking at where the department and field of conservation has been, where it is now and where it is going.”

Admission is free and no reservation is required, but seating is limited. The discussion will take place in the Pavilion Auditorium and be simulcast in the Kahn Auditorium.

Claire Barry has been the Kimbell’s director of conservation emerita since April 2021, when she retired from her full-time position. She first joined the museum in 1984, when she was hired as the Kimbell’s first full-time conservator. Barry set up the conservation department with state-of-the-art equipment and developed the conservation program to examine and care for the needs of the Kimbell’s collection, with an emphasis on paintings. In 1992, she initiated a joint conservation program at the Kimbell Art Museum to care for the museum’s European paintings as well as the American paintings at the neighboring Amon Carter Museum. In addition to hands-on treatment of paintings, Barry also published

numerous technical studies devoted to artists' creative practices, ranging from Michelangelo, Federico Barocci, Georges de La Tour, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Francisco de Zurbarán and Claude Monet to Charles Demuth, Thomas Cole, Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins. In recognition of her contributions in conservation at the Kimbell, Barry was appointed director of conservation in 2011. She lectures regularly on artists' painting techniques and consults with museums and private collectors. Barry also serves on the board of Save Venice Inc., where she participates in the projects committee to choose and fund restorations in the Venice region. Additionally, she serves on the Meadows Museum Advisory Council and the Visiting Committee for the Sherman Fairchild Paintings Conservation Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Elise Effmann Clifford is head of paintings conservation at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, where she has been since 2007. Her prior position was at the Kimbell Art Museum as assistant conservator of paintings starting in 2003. She trained at the Conservation Center, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, with her final year internship spent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, followed by an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. She has published on such diverse topics as the rediscovery of a painting by Thomas Cole, the painting technique of the Pre-Raphaelite John Roddam Spencer Stanhope, the reattribution of an early work by Canaletto and the materials and techniques of the Le Nain Brothers, a study co-authored with Claire Barry.

Bart J.C. Devolder received his M.A. in painting conservation from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, Belgium, in 2002. He held internships at the Akademia Sztuk Pięknych, Krakow, Poland, the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), Brussels, and the Musée du Louvre, Paris. He also received a fellowship from the Straus Center for Conservation at the Harvard University Art Museums (2003–4) and was the Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Painting Conservation at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2004–7). Devolder has worked for the Kimbell Art Museum and Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas, first as assistant conservator of paintings (2007–10) and later as associate conservator of paintings (2010–12). Before joining the Princeton University Art Museum as conservator of collections in the summer of 2018 and, since 2020, as chief conservator, he worked in Belgium as the on-site coordinator and painting conservator for the restoration of the Ghent Altarpiece by the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck (2012–18).

Devolder has studied, published and lectured on a wide variety of topics, ranging from Fayum portraits, Early Netherlandish canvas paintings and the representation of gold brocades in Netherlandish paintings to the methods and techniques of Cubist paintings. He is also particularly interested in the newer applications of computer sciences to the field of studying old master paintings. Devolder likes to use an understanding of the ways artworks are created as a catalyst to interact with people and students from different backgrounds and disciplines.

Michael Gallagher, who was born in Liverpool, undertook post-graduate training in the conservation of easel painting at the Hamilton Kerr Institute, University of Cambridge, England. Following a fellowship at the J. Paul Getty Museum, he was appointed assistant conservator of paintings at the Kimbell Art Museum in 1992. As a contractual conservator from 1995 to 1999 for the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, he conserved six panels from an altarpiece by the Master of the Crispin Legend, wings of an altarpiece by the Master of the Darmstadt Passion and *Saints Gregory, Maurus, Pappianus, and Domitilla* by Peter Paul Rubens. In May 1999, he was appointed keeper of conservation at the National Galleries of Scotland, where he oversaw more than two dozen staff members in the Conservation and Registrars' Departments and was directly responsible for the conservation of a number of major paintings. These works include Sandro Botticelli's *The Virgin Adoring the Sleeping Christ Child*, Thomas Gainsborough's *William 1st Earl Cathcart*, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's *A Young Man with a Basket of Fruit*, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo's *The Rape of Europa* and Anthony Van Dyck's *St. Sebastian Bound for Martyrdom*.

Gallagher took up his position at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in October 2005. He initiated and oversaw the major refurbishment of the Sherman Fairchild Painting Conservation Center that was completed in March 2009. In addition to his managerial role, since arriving at the museum he has worked on paintings by Bassano, Cranach, Gerard David, Giaquinto, Giovanni da Milano, La Tour, Le Brun, Pietro Lorenzetti, Moretto, Perino del Vaga, Poussin, Reynolds, Rubens, del Sarto, Subleyras, Titian, Valentin and Velázquez. He has served on numerous cross-departmental committees and in 2015–16 was Chairman of the Forum of Curators, Conservators and Scientists at the museum. He has published articles on specific treatments and broader themes and has lectured regularly throughout his career.

Peter Van de Moortel is chief conservator at the Kimbell Art Museum, a role he assumed in 2021. He joined the Museum in 2017, as assistant conservator, and became associate conservator in 2019. During his time at the Kimbell, Van de Moortel both worked on European and American pictures by artists such as Girolamo Romanino, Bartholomé Esteban Murillo, Nicolas Lancret and William-Adolphe Bouguereau and has conducted technical research on works by Winslow Homer, Frederic Remington, Salvador Dalí and Francisco de Zurbarán. Prior to joining the Kimbell, Van de Moortel was the Sherman Fairchild Fellow in Paintings Conservation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and held postgraduate positions at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, Belgium; the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA) in Brussels, Belgium; and the Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg in Maastricht, The Netherlands. Van de Moortel holds an M.A. in art history and archaeology from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, as well as a B.A. and an M.A. in conservation and restoration from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Antwerp, Belgium.

SUPPORT

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VISITOR INFORMATION

Admission to the museum's permanent collection is always free. Special exhibition admission is \$18 for adults; \$16 for seniors, K–12 educators, students and military personnel; \$14 for ages 6–11; free for children under 6; and \$3 for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. Admission is half-price all day on Tuesdays and after 5 p.m. on Fridays.

The Kimbell Art Museum is open Tuesdays through Thursdays and Saturdays, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Fridays, noon–8 p.m.; Sundays, noon–5 p.m.; closed Mondays, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. For general information, call 817-332-8451.

ABOUT THE CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Prior to the construction of the Louis I. Kahn Building, founders Kay and Velma Kimbell envisioned a conservation program to “preserve for future generations what has been entrusted to its care.” The pre-architectural program, dated 1966, called for a conservation studio with an “open studio work area” with the caveat: “must face north, with entire wall glazed; it is impossible to get enough light in this room!” With the building's completion in 1972, the paintings conservation studio became one of the first purpose-built museum conservation studios in the United States.

ABOUT THE KIMBELL ART MUSEUM

The Kimbell Art Museum, owned and operated by the Kimbell Art Foundation, is internationally renowned for both its collections and its architecture. The Kimbell's collections range in period from antiquity to the 20th century and include European masterpieces by artists such as Fra Angelico, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Bernini, Velázquez, Vigée Le Brun, Monet, Cézanne, Picasso and Matisse; important collections of Egyptian and classical antiquities; and the art of Asia, Africa and the Ancient Americas.

The museum's 1972 building, designed by the American architect Louis I. Kahn, is widely regarded as one of the outstanding architectural achievements of the modern era. A second building, designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano, opened in 2013 and now provides space for special exhibitions, dedicated classrooms and a 289-seat auditorium with excellent acoustics for music. For more information, visit kimbellart.org.

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PRESS IMAGES

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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